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## Acquisition of Further Shareholdings

- *German Startups Group builds a stage-agnostic portfolio of the most promising German startups representative for the German startup scene*
  - *Nikolas Samios named Chief Operating Officer*

**Berlin, 31.07.2014:** German Startups Group Berlin AG, entrepreneurial holding company and provider of venture capital for Germany's flourishing startup scene, has acquired shares in the following companies within the last eight months: Ayondo, Book a Tiger, Customer Alliance, Dalia Research, Dr. Z, Exozet, FanMiles, Friendsurance, Juniqe, Lingoda, meinKauf, Pyreg, Returbo, Solar Tower Technologies, SoundCloud, Urbanara, and WunderCar. German Startups Group has also acquired shares in another prominent German startup, which it will publish details of soon. Within two years of its inception, German Startups Group already possesses a broad, stage-agnostic portfolio that serves as a representative sample of the German startup landscape and the - in their view - best "start-ups made in Germany". German Startups Group still pursues the goal of acquiring 'secondary shares' to attain shares in attractive, more mature startups. At the same time, the provision of liquidity for shares in startups prior to an exit is frequently rewarded with significant discounts.

German Startups Group has also named Nikolas Samios, an experienced Berlin venture capital expert, Chief Operating Officer (COO). He will be responsible for investment activities and investment management alongside the founder and CEO, Christoph Gerlinger. Nikolas Samios will at the same time become both a shareholder in German Startups Group Berlin, which is in the process of changing its legal form into GmbH & Co. KGaA, as well as a partner in the general partner entity with unlimited liability, the Komplimentär-GmbH. "I'm looking forward to continued, intensified, and fertile cooperation," comments Christoph Gerlinger, "we have already worked closely together with him in his role as MD of the VC service provider and family office Cooperativa for one and a half years."



A brief summary of the new portfolio companies of the German Startups Group -

## Seed Stage

- **Book a Tiger** is an online platform on which professional cleaners can be found quickly, conveniently, and for a low price. Whether for the home or the office, the most experienced cleaners can be booked in less than a minute for a one-off clean or a more regular arrangement. The selection process for the cleaners is tailored and strict, ensuring a high-quality service for customers. Book a Tiger was founded in April 2014 by Claude Ritter and Nikita Fahrenholz, co-founders of Delivery Hero, a startup in which German Startups Group is also invested.
- **Dalia Research** develops cloud-based technology solutions for market, social, and opinion research on smartphones and tablets. The vision of the company, founded in October 2013, is to facilitate access to views and opinions and to filter for their customers the most relevant data on what billions of people think from an ocean of information. Dalia Research also offers the research industry solutions in reaching specific target groups on mobile devices, decreasing workload, streamlining data acquisition, and tying consumers more closely to their products.
- **Junique** the online shop for low-priced, fresh, eclectic art, apparel, and accessories. It offers a handpicked selection of artworks by independent artists printed on various products, such as posters, canvases, acrylic glass, T-shirts, sweaters, tech cases, stationery, and home accessories. The platform enables artists to share their talent with a larger audience and thus provide customers with the most original artworks available. Junique ships to 12 European countries and plans to increase its international standing to become the number one destination for eclectic art across Europe. The founders were previously responsible for the strategic orientation and logistics of FAB's European operations.
- **Lingoda** is a Berlin-based online language school active in more than 60 countries worldwide. Founded in October 2012, the company offers language courses with native speaking teachers online via videoconference. Within one year of its inception,



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Lingoda became the market leader for learning German online abroad and is gradually expanding into other languages.

- **meinKauf** is an innovative online platform for digitalized brochures. It helps users find local offerings of everyday consumer goods online or via mobile devices. For customers, meinKauf is a practical shopping tool that offers valuable content, such as special offers, promotions, and opening hours, as well as store and ATM locations. The platform, founded in December 2013, offers retailers the opportunity to specifically distribute their conventional brochures online and to address customers online based on their location. In 2013, meinKauf was awarded with the Daphne Excellent Project. The founder Markus Pichler was CEO - until 2011 - and co-founder of the Austrian and Swiss operations of the successful German start-up DailyDeal.
- The mobile app **WunderCar** provides drivers and passengers with a platform for easy and spontaneous ride-sharing at any time. WunderCar adds a revolutionary model to urban mobility and creates an exciting alternative to conventional means of transportation. At the same time, WunderCar differs largely from a taxicab agency. The motivation to take or give a lift is more than just getting from A to B - it's an opportunity to meet great people. WunderCar won second prize in the Webfuture Award 2014. Gunnar Froh, founder and CEO of WunderCar, was previously operations manager at the prominent US start-up Airbnb.

## Early Stage

- **Ayondo** offers social trading and CFD trading from one source in the FinTech space, with the aim of revolutionizing financial products for private investors through innovative trading and next-generation investment solutions. Investors can follow the strategies of top traders and copy their actions directly from their Ayondo account, or become a top trader themselves and earn additional revenues with every trade. Ayondo has been voted CFD broker of the year 2014 on Brokerwahl.de and is the winner of the World of Trading Award 2013.



- **Customer Alliance** is the German market leader in the field of online review management for hotels, and supports hoteliers in generating and using reviews in the most efficient way. With its *Review Analytics* software as a service, Customer Alliance provides a reliable 360° review management solution for the professional handling of online reviews. It gives hotels the opportunity to manage their online reviews and obtain important statistics for their quality management. Furthermore, the *Price Analytics* tool supports hotels in implementing effective pricing by tracking competitors, and forewarning hoteliers about significant changes on the business market. Since its inception in 2009, Customer Alliance has been able to convince over 2500 hotels from 35 countries of their products and employs an international team of 60 people.
- **FanMiles** develops and drives emotions with FanLoyalty Programs worldwide. FanMiles charges sports clubs and sponsors a fee for managing their fan currency, with which loyal fans can receive rewards in return for visiting the stadium or buying merchandise. As the first ever vendor, it connects the established mechanism of conventional loyalty programs with the emotional world of sports clubs and entertainment. FanMiles has already contracted several German Bundesliga clubs and sponsors and will be entering the international market from 2015. FanMiles is headquartered in Berlin, and has offices in New York and Paris.
- **Friendsurance** is a peer-to-peer platform for insurances. Users can insure themselves individually with an insurance company of their choice and afterwards form groups with their friends and family, Facebook contacts, or other users suggested by Friendsurance to use deductible mechanics of insurance products to their advantage with the help the Friendsurance principle. The group members agree to a higher deductible with the insurance companies and compensate each other for any events of damage below the deductible level out of a group pot, which funds generated from the significantly lower insurance premiums due to the higher deductible. If there is no claim, the group members receive premium cashbacks. In return, this reduces the costs of insurance companies since the Friendsurance principle creates positive incentives against insurance fraud and reduces the cost of processing small damage claims. In 2013 over 90% of those who used the Friendsurance principle got a premium



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cashback. Friendsurance's vision is to offer insurance at the lowest price possible at all times. Currently, Friendsurance employs a team of over 40 people at its headquarters in Berlin headquarters. Friendsurance is the winner of the service innovation prize "Assekuranz 2011".

- **Solar Tower Technologies** provides products, systems, and solutions for Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) plants on the basis of solar tower plants' technology. With patented technologies and solutions - in particular heliostat fields and receivers - STT offers much more efficient "solar islands" than the current reference systems and is most probably the technological leader in this market globally.
- **Urbanara** is an e-commerce own brand launched in 2010 for high-quality homewares and accessories. Direct trade relationships with carefully selected manufacturers from all over the world and the restriction of its offline retail presence to pop-up stores allow for products with exceptional quality to be sold for prices that are up to 70% lower than offered by physical retailers. Urbanara operates in the German, British, and Austrian markets and employs over 50 staff in its headquarters in Berlin and in Shanghai. Urbanara is the winner of the Online Retail Award 2013 and the German Diversity Award 2013, as presented by McKinsey and the Wirtschaftswoche.

## Growth Stage

- **Dr. Z** is the first and only established brand for quality in dental care at affordable prices throughout Germany and offers a convincing alternative to traditional dental practices. As such, Dr. Z provides all the standard benefits that statutory health insurance providers offer, and the full range of private services with a considerable reduction in price. The ISO certification confirms the high quality of all dental care centres. The dentist network, which is growing incrementally, currently comprises 20 dental practices and dentistry centres. Dr. Z aims to roll out the business model in all major and medium-sized German cities in order to provide their services nationwide.
- **Exozet**, one of Germany's leading digital agencies in the media and entertainment segment, is shaping the digital world with an interplay of creativity and technology.



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The agency's strategy: blending its digital DNA with well-founded strategies, creative designs, and a spirit for the technological frontier. In addition to media conglomerates such as the BBC or Axel Springer and big-name brands and organizations such as Red Bull, Audi, and Deutsche Telekom, it is also startups such as Wooga, LaterPay, and Magine TV that rely on Exozet's products and services. Exozet currently has 140 employees across Berlin, Potsdam, and Vienna.

- **Pyreg** is a provider of CleanTech and designs, develops, and manufactures machinery for carbonisation purposes, which convert biomasses into valuable biochar, and sewage sludge into fertilizing substrates. One single PYREG 500 unit effectively sequesters CO<sub>2</sub> emissions equivalent to around 500 motor vehicles per year. Pyreg is the winner of the Innovation Award for Future Initiatives Rhineland-Palatinate in 2009, the Innovator's Award of Rhineland-Palatinate in 2010, and the SUCCESS technology award given by the ISB in 2011.
- **Returbo** markets returned goods, B-stock items, overstocks, and end-of-lifetime products, as well as new merchandise internationally through different online channels and is known by customers for high quality and excellent value for money. Returbo is also the right contact point for all questions relating to returns. As a reliable problem solver, Returbo handles the entire returns process for cooperation partners under its Return Services brand - from receiving the returns to their immediate secondary marketing through its established network of partners. It is therefore Germany's first service provider to offer an integrated, one-stop full-service solution for the effective and efficient marketing of returns and excess stock.
- **SoundCloud** - one of Germany's most prominent start-ups - is a social sound platform that gives users unprecedented access to the world's largest community of music and audio creators. SoundCloud allows everyone to discover original music and audio, connect with each other, and share their sounds with the world. In addition, sound creators can use the platform to instantly record, upload and share sounds across websites, blogs, and social networks. SoundCloud employs over 200 people in their headquarters in Berlin alone and has offices in London, New York, San Francisco, and Sofia.



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## German Startups Group - We Love Startups!

German Startups Group is an entrepreneurial holding company that supports the set-up, development, funding, and - at the appropriate time - the exit of young growth companies by providing them with business expertise and capital to create shareholder value. Our team identifies attractive entrepreneurial fields of activity across numerous industries by analysing technology trends and market developments. Within these segments, we actively back talented entrepreneurs with disruptive and highly scalable business ideas with “smart money”, i.e. capital, knowledge, experience, and contacts. The companies we have invested in serve as a prestigious sample of the, in our eyes, most promising “startups made in Germany”.

More information: <http://www.german-startups.com>